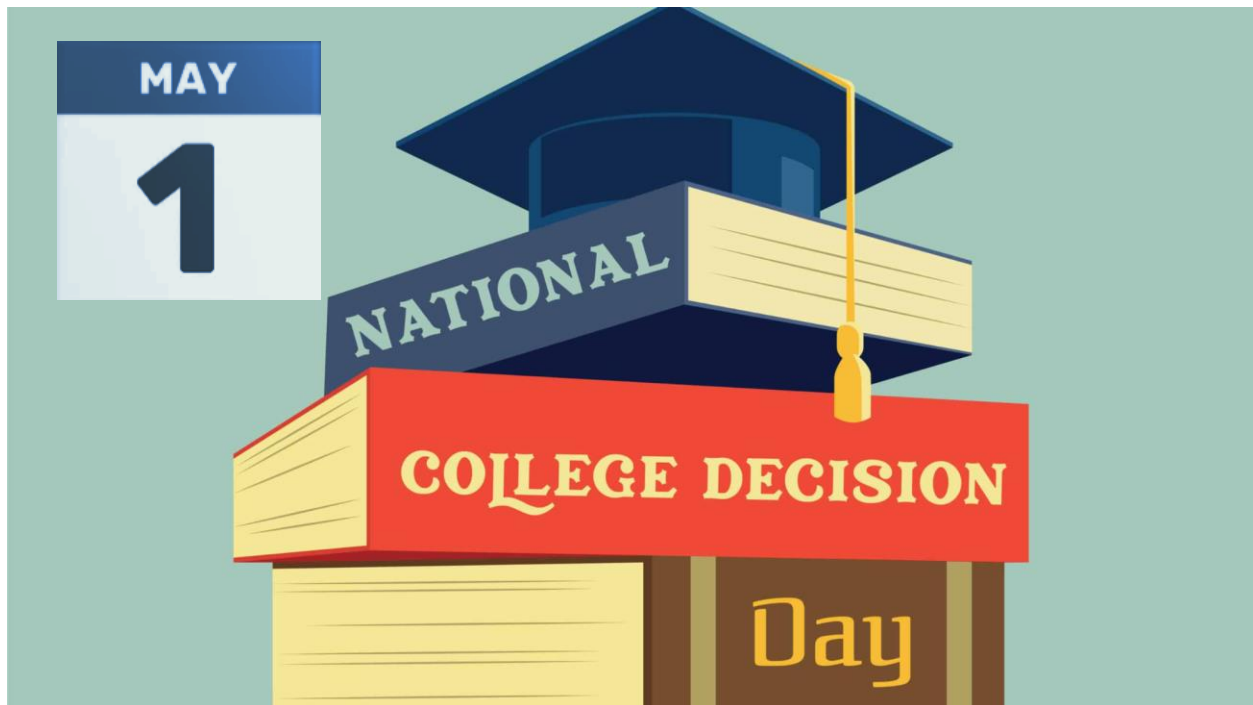




Preparing for National College Decision Day

Over spring break, most of our seniors receive the news they have been waiting for - their college admissions decision. Whether they receive an acceptance, deferral, waitlist, or denial, seniors now should know what their college and university options are for the Fall. **Seniors must now take a look at all of their acceptances and make perhaps the biggest decision of their lives: choosing a college.**



National College Decision Day is May 1st. This is the deadline most universities (aside from colleges with rolling admissions) have in place for students to pay their enrollment deposit to secure their spot as incoming freshmen. After this date, if a university does not get your enrollment, they may determine that you are no longer interested and your admissions spot may be passed along to deferred students or those on the waitlist. To commit to a college, you must pay a non-refundable deposit that will go towards your tuition and follow other specific steps for enrollment. **Each college-bound senior must commit to their school of choice before May 1st to ensure that their enrollment is secured.** In this *College and Career Corner*, we'll go over the various factors that students should consider in their acceptances when deciding on which college they want to attend.



When applying for colleges, each senior should have done some initial research on each school and followed specific reasons for applying to the universities that they did. Each school they applied to and were accepted to should have been a school that they could see themselves attending. Now that it is decision time, however, students will want to delve further into their knowledge of each school to help them narrow down their options until they find out which school is the best fit for them and where they would like to enroll. Picking where to apply may have been hard, but choosing the university where they want to attend will be even more difficult. Considering the following approaches and factors may help in this process:

- 1. Compare the Cost of Attendance** - for each college that you were accepted to, find your total cost of attending. This includes tuition, fees, books, meal plans, living arrangements, etc. Compare the financial aid that you were offered for each school also and how that will offset your final cost. For many students, the cost of attending a university can be the number one factor when making an enrollment decision.
- 2. Majors, Programs, Curriculum** - make sure that the schools you were accepted to offer the major you are interested in pursuing. Although this should have been one of the first filters used when looking for schools to apply to, sometimes a student's intended major changes as they progress through their senior year. Any school you are considering should offer the major(s) or program(s) you want and offer opportunities for you to get real-world experience through internships, on-campus jobs, research opportunities, or continuing education.
- 3. Travel and Location** - expand your consideration beyond the school itself to the larger community surrounding the campus. Are you interested in living in a big city or a smaller town? Do you want to be far away from home or would you prefer to have a shorter commute? Will it be easier for you to travel to see friends or family? Are there certain things about the particular state that you'll be living in that you are really looking forward to? All of these factors can help narrow down which school you'll choose.
- 4. Student Life** - although the primary reason for attending college is to further your education, obtain a degree, and have the credentials and experience needed to begin a career, students can also gain practical experience, develop social skills, and expand their networking through extracurricular activities. Sports, clubs, and student organizations allow students to better understand their abilities, talents, and personal goals. Daily life on campus and the right environment can help students build self-confidence, make life-long friends, take a break from studying, have fun, and make college some of the best four years of their lives!



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- 5. Waitlisted at Your Dream School?** - Even when a university has a waitlist, students are not guaranteed admission; in fact, less than 25% of waitlisted students are admitted and universities typically notify their waitlist students of their acceptance over the summer (between June and July). This means that students may jeopardize their enrollment at other universities if they do not commit to a school by the May 1st deadline. To ensure you have a school to attend to in the fall, pay your non-refundable deposit to your second-choice school and secure your spot there. If your top choice admits you from the waitlist later on, you can always choose to surrender your deposit at your second-choice. Having that peace of mind and security of the backup school enrollment will pay off if you remain waitlisted or not offered admittance.



Remember, **National College Decision Day is May 1st and seniors must enroll at a school before their enrollment deadline.** Choosing the right college to enroll at can be one of the biggest decisions that students will make and finding ways to determine the best fit for them can be intimidating, but if they follow the steps above the process becomes more manageable. Where are they going to be the happiest? Which school meets most or all of their needs? If you would like any help deciding where to enroll, please visit the College and Career Counselor, Ms. Catherine Lewis, in room 116 or reach out via email at clewis@sjnacademies.org or call 262-646-7283.